

PUBLIC SHADE TREE COMMITTEE

Fiscal Year 2004

The Public Shade Tree Committee has had a quiet year, but the Town was again recognized as a 'TREE CITY'.

The major impact in the past year has been the plethora of early retirements, which have affected the Committee:

Thomas Sullivan, head tree-crew foreman

Herb Bryan, Committee member

Peter Westover, Conservation Director and ad hoc Committee member liaison.

The Committee has examined its role and status in the committee structure of the Town, the associated relationship with the Tree Warden and the Conservation Commission, and how the Committee might function with respect to MGL 27. It will make recommendations to the Conservation Commission and the Select Board in the fall of 2004.

Few issues concerning public shade tree removals have come before the Committee this year. We believe these have all been addressed in a manner acceptable to the Committee and the residents involved.

Outstanding issues that need resolution are the role and status of the Public Shade Tree Committee and the overextension of the Town crew dealing with shade trees. At the present time, the shade tree crew carries out several different unrelated tasks, which often leave little time to address shade tree issues such as tree maintenance, tree inventory and tree planting. The need for a dedicated budget for trees still remains an ongoing issue and, until the economy improves, will be an ongoing restriction on the ability of the Public Shade Tree Committee to meet the needs of the Town of Amherst.

As in previous years, we held an Arbor Day celebration with the fifth-grade students at Fort River School with the able assistance of Steve Gervickas, Assistant Principal; the Town of Amherst tree staff, the Town Tree Warden and William Hutchinson, chair of the Public Shade Tree Committee. Each student was given a young spruce tree, courtesy of Cows Lumber of North Amherst, and one of the young trees was planted adjacent to previously planted trees, which we can report a growing well.

Stanley Ziomek, Tree Warden

William A. Hutchinson, Chairperson